

# World Language



## Content Area Standards Revision

September 2019



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## Office of Teaching, Learning & Assessment

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# Introduction

World Language education in Nebraska has a long history of excellence. Nebraska world language educators are nationally noted for strong pedagogy and understanding of second language acquisition. The following report outlines the steps taken to provide teachers with quality standards in the area of World Language teaching and learning.

Information was gathered to assess the growth of world language programming (see Figure 1). The Nebraska Department of Education annually collects data from school districts regarding courses that are taught for secondary credit. Course specific information includes the name of the teacher and the number of students taking the course. Data was compared over a seventeen-year period. Although the percentage of students taking world language in 2017-2018 was notably lower, overall there has been upward growth through much of the 2000s.

Languages Taught in Nebraska								
	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2012-2013	2009-2010	2006-2007	2003-2004	2000-2001
ASL	7	19	6	-	0	0	0	-
Chinese	1,057	1,036	892	798	422	81	71	34
French	11,007	13,929	13,131	12,772	8202	5314	5917	5,865
German	6,446	7,184	7,073	7,141	5552	4251	4684	6,761
Japanese	164	208	190	161	188	108	114	264
Latin	946	1,191	969	1,144	886	494	537	709
Russian	30	57	117	49	22	12	15	32
Spanish	85,579	92,177	88,784	84,160	59478	48377	46374	46,776
Language Survey	13,051	14,460	14,199	11,486	12691	11288	9011	9,000
Other	5,956	6,356	5,391	4,449	6599	5704	3607	3,509
Total WL Students	124,243	136,617	130,752	122,160	94040	75629	70330	72,950
Total Students grades 7-12	156,808	154,677	151,812	145,979	144796	149154	150417	Not Available
Secondary Students Enrolled in World Language	79%	88%	86%	84%	65%	51%	47%	Not Available
Total Students K-12	361,605	302,386	299,877	289,411	282,977	280,202	278,858	280,495
Percentage of Students Enrolled in World Languages	34%	45.2%	43.60%	42.21%	33%	27%	25%	26%
Source: Nebraska Department of Education. World Language Specialist. 2018								

Figure 1 "Languages Taught in Nebraska" compilation of annual reporting data showing raw number of students enrolled in world language programming for secondary credit. Created 2018 by NDE World Language Program Specialist.

Prior to the standards revision process, a survey was conducted to assess the status of world language teaching in Nebraska. Survey links were sent to all certified World

Language teachers in Nebraska. Of the approximately 890 links sent, 420 participants responded. Participants represented preK-12 world language teachers in languages commonly taught in Nebraska. While the survey asked for information regarding the use of standards, curriculum, and materials, it also contained a free-response portion that allowed teachers to share their beliefs in second language teaching. The responses for Question 36 (see Figure 2) would serve as a starting point for the standards revision process.

Q 36: What is the mission of World Language Education?		
Cultural Understanding	To communicate with cultural understanding	10
	To have respect for other cultures	33
	To have knowledge of other cultures	47
Global Citizenship	To be global leaders	4
	To be prepared for employment opportunities in a global economy	2
	To be culturally aware global citizens	2
	To be global citizens	18
Communication	To communicate with other culture groups out of the US	7
	To communicate in order to accomplish a chosen purpose	8
	To have the ability to communicate in another language	39
Bilingual Benefits	To improve L1 skills	2
	To improve the cognitive process	3
	To connect to other disciplines	1
	To continue language learning at the college level	6
	To create a life-long learner	4

Figure 2 "Q.36: What is the mission of world language education" shows common raw numbers of responses by world language teacher respondents. Word analysis grouped common responses and resulted in common categories. Note the taxonomy level of the responses.

Following the survey, which was released in December 2017, a series of events would culminate in the draft document of the standards. The draft was reviewed and discussed in several focus groups before being presented for public input from May to June, 2019. Lead editors Alicia Dallman Shoemaker and Jamie Honke met with World Language Program Specialist Stephanie Call to discuss the final changes. On September 6, the Nebraska State Board of Education unanimously approved the World Language Standards.

# Standards Revision Events

## World Language Colloquium 2016: What are our priorities in world language learning?

In 2016, Dr. Janine Theiler initiated the first World Language Colloquium to discuss and establish priorities for NDE in meeting the needs of world language teachers across the state. Task force groups were formed to address needs in the areas of programming, proficiency, professional learning, advocacy and collaboration. Around that time, NDE decided to establish a consistent and cohesive plan to creating and revising standards in all content areas. A schedule for revision was created that marked 2018 as the year for World Language revision.

## The Research: What is the status quo of world language learning in Nebraska?

The Nebraska Department of Education sent a statewide survey to all world language teachers in December 2017. Teachers were asked for input that would help to shape the discussion at the upcoming second World Language Colloquium. Questions included prompts for language demographics, materials used, the role of the current world language frameworks, and professional practices.

## World Language Colloquium 2018: What is the purpose of world language learning?

Forty participants gathered in Lincoln in February 2018. The majority of participants were those who had participated in the 2016 Colloquium. Representatives from districts throughout the state, technical colleges, universities, educational service units, and international associations discussed the purpose of language learning and the skill sets that it requires.

## World Language Standards Advisory Council: What are the essential ingredients?

Seventeen educators arrived in Lincoln in June and August 2018 to author the revised standards. The group analyzed and compared standards from other states, from other content areas, and from national organizations both language and non-language specific. Working through mindful discussions, the Council established the essentials of world language learning.

## World Language Standards Writing Team: What are our expectations?

The writing team met from October to December 2018 to create indicators at specific proficiency levels. The proficiency levels established by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages are Novice, Intermediate, Advanced, Superior, and Distinguished.

## World Language Standards Focus Teams: How do our standards apply to specific areas?

Areas of special focus were language immersion, heritage speakers, classical languages, critical languages, and Native American languages. These groups met electronically to provide input into the standards.

## Public Review

The online survey launched on April 30, 2019 and closed on June 24, 2019. Although the survey was open to the general public, the majority of responses were from educators (see Figure 3).

- 95% agree or strongly agree that the standards reflect the essential knowledge and skills that students need relative to world language education.
- 89% feel that the standards provide clear and specific learning targets needed for instruction and assessment.
- 94% feel that the standards are rigorous and encourage advanced skill development.

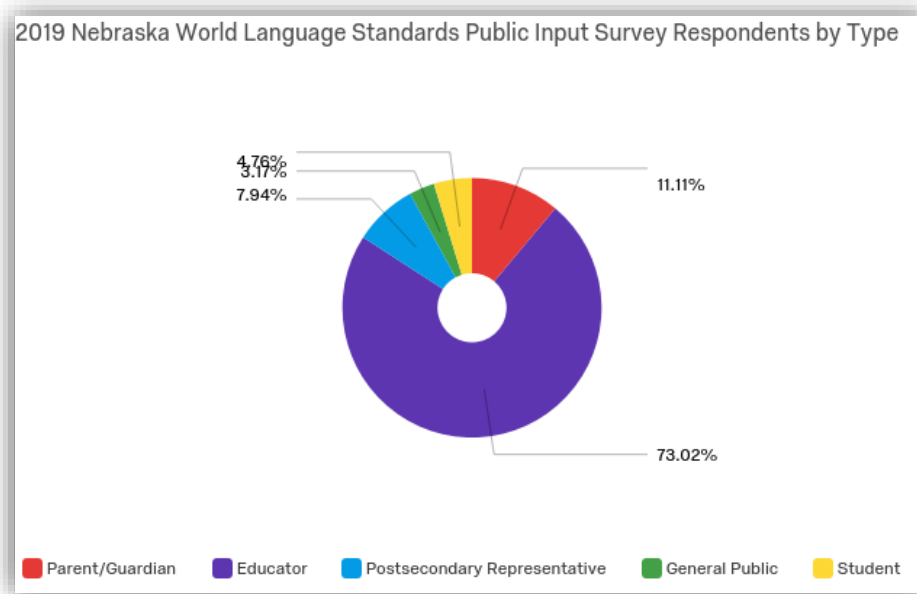


Figure 3 "2019 Nebraska World Language Standards Public Input Survey Respondents by Type" shows the self-reported roles of survey respondents.

Based on the responses and commentary, key changes were made to the document.

### Key Changes

- ▶ The language of the indicators was clarified to provide more clear and specific learning targets.
- ▶ Specific examples were provided to support focus groups of language for heritage speakers and for classical languages.

# Nebraska State Board Approval

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The Nebraska State Board of Education was regularly updated and given opportunity to provide feedback on the standards revision process. During the August 2019 State Board meeting, Board members completed a first reading and were able to ask questions regarding the standards or the process. On September 6, 2019, the Nebraska State Board of Education unanimously approved the World Language Standards.

The approved World Language Standards are available on the Nebraska Department of Education website at:

<https://www.education.ne.gov/worldlanguage/standards-proficiency/>

## World Language Standards Implementation

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Following the September 6, 2019 approval of the standards, World Language Program Specialist Stephanie Call presented a standards workshop and keynote at the Nebraska International Language Association annual conference to kick off the standards implementation. Workshops are planned over 2019-2020 for every Educational Service Unit in Nebraska.

The World Language Standards Implementation Framework and other implementation resources are available online at the Nebraska Department of Education World Language Program found at [www.education.ne.gov/worldlanguage](http://www.education.ne.gov/worldlanguage). The library of resources continues to grow, but currently includes:

### Introduction to the Nebraska World Language Standards

- Guideline to Read the Structure of the Standards
- The Five “C”s of Nebraska’s World Language Learning
- Understanding Standards and Indicators
- Applying Performance Level Expectations

### Nebraska World Language Standards

- Nebraska World Language Standards Approved September 2019
- Nebraska World Language Standards Separated by Performance Levels
- World Language Standards Indicators by Scope From Novice Low to Advanced High (Excel)
- Nebraska World Language Standards Quick Reference Poster 11 x 17

### Implementation Framework and Supports

- Nebraska World Language Implementation Framework (Excel)
- Nebraska World Language Standards Implementation Framework (PDF)

### References and Acknowledgements

- Nebraska World Language Standards Acknowledgements
- Nebraska World Language Standards List of Resource Documents

### Stage 1 Resources: Exploration

- The Ultimate Proficiency Goal: Making the Point Discussion Guide Slide Show
  - Involve critical stakeholders in a discussion regarding the expected and needed level of language proficiency and how that may impact programming. Potential stakeholder roles: higher education representatives from area schools, business leaders, counselors, parents, students, teachers, and administrators.
- Resources:
  - What Does Research Show About The Benefits of Language Learning
  - Making Languages Our Business: Addressing Foreign language Demand Among U.S. Employers
  - Foreign Language Requirement for College Admissions
- Assessing the Status Quo
  - World Language Program Assessment Model
  - WL Program Evaluation Status Quo Expectations worksheet



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